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More about the Gothenburg system

Stockholm

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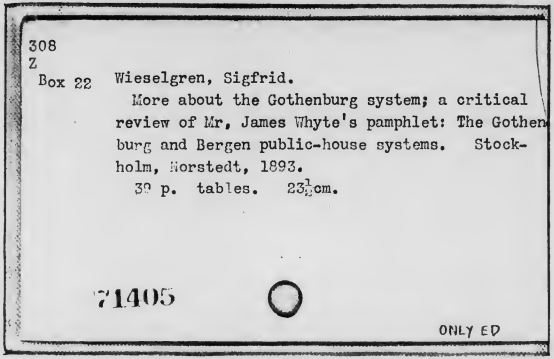

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MORE ABOUT
THE GOTHENBURG SYSTEM

A CRITICAL REVIEW
OF MR. JAMES WHYTE'S PAMPHLET:
THE GOTHENBURG AND BERGEN PUBLIC-HOUSE SYSTEMS

BY

DR. SIGFRID WIESELGREN,
PRESIDENT OF THE SWEDISH TEMPERANCE SOCIETY,
DIRECTOR GENERAL OF HIS MAJESTY'S PRISONS,
MEMBER OF THE UPPER CHAMBER OF THE SWEDISH DIET.

STOCKHOLM.
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More about the Gothenburg System.

It is a well-known fact that during the controversies in England about reforms in the liquor legislation the method of regulating the sale of spirits which in 1865 was adopted in Gothenburg, or the so called Gothenburg System, has attracted considerable attention. A pamphlet, published this year in London under the title: »*The Gothenbury and Bergen Public-House Systems*. By *James Whyte*, Secretary of the United Kingdom Alliance», is only a new proof of this fact. Like several others of his countrymen, the author has visited Gothenburg with the object of inquiring on the spot into the character and effects of the system. The results of his investigations have been set forth in the above-mentioned pamphlet which — as the title indicates — also contains some information of the Bergen (or Norwegian) system, described by Mr. Th. M. Wilson in his book on this subject.

Having been requested by temperance reformers in England to give my opinion of Mr. Whyte's pamphlet, I feel bound to say, at the outset, that it throughout bears witness of the earnestness with which the author has striven to fulfil his object. This must be respectfully acknowledged. But Mr. Whyte is evidently unaware of certain facts of so great importance that they *must* be known by every one, desirous of forming a correct opinion of the matter. In many respects, therefore, his arguments are fallacious, his evidence is insufficient. In the following I shall try to prove these assertions.

It is evident that Mr. Whyte has founded his arguments on such a conception of the Gothenburg Public-House System, that the principle of this system is to bring the whole alcoholic liquor traffic under the regulation of the community and, by means of restrictive measures in every direction, to reduce as much as pos-

sible the sale of intoxicants with the final aim that this trade might be more and more difficult and thereby totally suppressed. He finds, however, that the Gothenburg Public-House Company (Swedish: Utskänkningsbolag) has not in its hands the whole trade in question and, upon this ground, he declares that the system is but incompletely adopted and since he finds that a number of licences for the sale of spirits by retail have been transferred by the Company itself on private persons, thereby making every control or restrictive influence from the side of the Company on this part of the trade impossible, he declares that the principle, on which the Company was founded, has been violated.

Here Mr. Whyte has made himself guilty of a fault which has been called »historical construction». Out of certain given facts he draws a theory, with which he compares what he finds in the reality and makes his judgment of the reality dependent on its correspondence with his theory. But this is not fair.

I am quite assured that, if Mr. Whyte and his followers had been charged with a commission to devise a plan for regulating the trade in intoxicants, they would have conceived their object in accordance with the above-mentioned theory, and that they would have drawn up their plan with this theory in view. In such a case it would have been quite fair to judge of their system by the success of it. But the men, who in 1865 formed the scheme, after which »the Gothenburg system» was arranged, did not act on such a principle which certainly had no connection at all with their intentions.

What they aimed at was to counteract the impoverishment of the *working classes* through drinking on credit in unhealthy, dark and dirty hovels of public-houses. where all restrictive regulations were eluded by covetous publicans, by finding out a public house system, according to which the sale of spirits at the bar should be carried on in clean and well-kept premises, where the rules of the law were scrupulously observed, where good order was preserved, where drinking on credit was to be strictly forbidden, and where the evil influences of the management of public-houses for private profit by private enterprise were to be removed by the statutes of the Company, which should make it impossible both for the shareholders and the *employés* of the Company, who carried on

the sale, to derive any profit whatever from the business. This, I dare to say, is quite another thing than Mr. Whyte's theory, and consequently it cannot be fair to test the effects of Gothenburg system with this theory as a touchstone.

It was a desire to make it impossible for private publicans to draw profit by the strong craving for spirits, prevailing among the working classes, that gave rise to the system. This was the starting point. Thus, from the very beginning, the system has taken a neutral standing with regard to the spirit-palaces or the restaurants of higher rank which are not frequented by workmen. The licensed establishments of this latter kind were not included in the offer which on the 7:th of April 1865 was tendered to the Gothenburg Municipal Council by the newly-formed company. The Company has, before the new system was brought into operation, plainly pronounced, that it did not aim at any guardianship over such visitors of public drinking houses as belonged to the classes which, on account of their education and social and economic position, must be considered able to take care of themselves in such a way as not to burden the society. But if what Mr. Whyte has to say about violation of principle through this latter arrangement, cannot rightly be used as an argument against the system, it remains to be seen whether his remarks seem to be justified, if we consider the position of the system with regard to the sale of spirits for consumption off the premises.

At the time when the Company was formed, it was not contrary to the Swedish Law that this sale of spirits (for consumption off the premises) was altogether carried on by companies. Although half a *kanna* (about $^1/_4$ gallon) was the minimum allowed to be sold for consumption off the premises, it was obvious that a considerable number of workmen for the sake of the cheaper price would use this way for procuring their spirits. Now, it may be rightfully remarked that it ought to have been in accordance with the principles of the system that the Company had tried to get in its hands all the licenses for the sale of spirits for consumption off the premises.

I imagine that this side of the question has been discussed among the men who had to work out the scheme. If they had proceeded from a theory which they had thought their duty to carry out in everything, it is obvious that this theory had de-

manded, that also the last mentioned sale of spirits (viz. for consump tion off the premiscs) should be brought under the control of the Company. But it is likely enough, that the matter-of-fact men who had to inquire into the question had taken into consideration that, if their proposal had been based on a theory, so logical and so complete as for instance that which has been indicated by Mr. Whyte, it would have been quite impracticable. They saw clearly that if, in the name of the theory, they had proposed that also this part of the liquor traffic should be conducted by the Company, this would have given rise to such a storm of indignation against the proposed reform that it would never have been introduced. The retail trade in ordinary spirits (Swedish: bränuvin, commonly translated »brandy») and »superior spirits» was in the hands of the wine-merchants and their trade had always been considered as an honest business which ought to be respected as well as every other. These merchants had even a good social position and often belonged to the leading citizens. If the whole retail trade in spirits had been committed to the Company, this would have caused the ruin of these merchants, as it would have been quite impossible for them to subsist solely on their trade in wines. In the eyes of the public in general such an arrangment would have been the same as to give to the Company an absolute power, a prerogative, which was not necessary for the realization of the principal object of the system and which could easily be abused in some way or other. And, moreover, when a *monopoly* with regard to the sale of spirits at the bar had been avoided, why should the Company monopolize the retail trade in general? This latter trade did not touch the interests of the working classes to such a great extent as the former and, therefore, it could not be expected that the wine- and spirit merchants should find it their duty to give up their licences for the sake of the labouring population of the towns. It is evident that the opposite opinions have yielded before reasons of this kind. The system which was proposed was incomplete from the point of view of the moral interests of the workmen and it was not intended to be so comprehensive as many believe. The Company which was formed, had only the character of an *utskänknings-bolag* (a Company for the bar trade in spirits) i. e. the principal object of the Company was to conduct the sale of spirits for consumption at the bars of such public-houses as were visited by workmen.

In several small towns, however, companies were formed after the Gothenburg system to which for a certain sum of money the whole number of licenses, viz. both the public-house licenses and the retail licences, were granted. These companies were soon able to dominate the whole spirit trade in their respective places; they raised the prices for the consumers and lowered them for the producers from whom they made their purchases. It is natural that this must create much discontent and ill-feeling among both these parties. And there were a good many people who saw with great indignation, how those of the companies that were not bound to hand over the profits of their trade to the community, not only enriched themselves in this manner but also, by means of underhand agreements with the municipalities, reduced the proportions of the licence fees which should go to the country board (*landsting*) and to the agricultural associations of the provinces in which the towns were situated. It went so far that in 1871 it was forbidden by law to grant retail licences to companies.

But now arose another evil which was very widely spread and caused much trouble and complaint all over the country. It was the so called »clubbing» (Swedisb: *salning*). In order to get their spirits at a cheaper price than at the public-houses, a number of workmen collected their money, handed over the sum to one of them, who as their agent started off to the shop of a wine and spirit merchant where one or several gallons of spirits were bought. The quantity was then distributed and consumed not only in private houses but also on the nearest street, yard, gateway or square. The inconveniences, caused by the clubbing, became so great that they had to be removed by the Legislature.

As early as 1873 the municipalities recovered the right of granting licences for the retail sale of spirits to companies; but in order to avoid the injurious consequences which such an arrangement could have on the trade in wines and spirits which in a legal manner was carried on by private merchants, the companies were permitted to transfer upon a private person, on payment of a certain fee, a license which first band had been granted to them, if such a transfer be approved by the provincial governor, who had to request the opinion of the town authorities upon the subject. At the same time it was ordained by law that the

whole profits of the companies should be handed over to the community.

The Gothenburg Company which very soon had found out that a retail trade in spirits, not placed under the control and supervision of the Company, was a great hindrance to the realization of the object of the system, and which already in 1870 had proposed and in 1871 had entered into negotiations with the town authorities about the transference on the Company of the whole number of licenses for the sale of spirits for consumption either on or off the premises — which negotiations then had no result — now at once caught the opportunity, hereby offered, to extend the application of its principle which could now be done without detriment to the wine- and spirit merchants. In 1874 the Gothenburg Company had in its hands all the licenses of the community for the retail sale of spirits. The Company kept as many licenses as were considered necessary for its purposes, and left the remaining licenses to the wine- and spirit merchants who thus »farmed» a part of the retail trade from the Company. In this manner it was made possible for these merchants to carry on their business and subsist on it, although, on the whole, they were very dissatisfied with the new arrangement. But the Company did not change name. It desired to show that the principal object which it had in view, was to conduct the sale of spirits at the bars of such public-houses as are frequented by workmen.

And this is really the principal object of the system. But the information that I have now given shows also that such part of the retail sale as has the working classes for its customers must be placed under the control and supervision of the Company and cannot be separated from it without putting aside the moral purposes of the system.

Mr. Whyte draws this conclusion still farther. He is of opinion that this must always be an inevitable consequence of the transference upon private persons of any licence, first hand granted to the Company.

It is also my opinion that the companies ought to be very cautious in such transfers and that it ought to be stipulated that all private merchants who hold licenses, granted by companies shall buy all their spirits from the companies. I believe, however, that the

results of such transfers are of a more economical than a moral importance. But these transfers could counteract the moral purposes of the system, if they were made without conditions.

Now, every one to whom a licence has been granted by the Company is subject to certain restrictions, on account of which he is forbidden to sell ordinary spirits (native Swedish brandy) i. e. he is only licensed to sell »superior spirits» or such intoxicants which, as a rule, the working classes cannot afford to use. The prices are stipulated by the Company in yearly contracts with the licenseholders, the Company reserving the right of raising the tariff in case of rise in the wholesale prices.

In order to show how contrary to the principles of the Company these transferences are, Mr. Whyte refers to a statement by the chief of the Gothenburg police who has said that cheap foreign spirits were now being much more used than formerly and were causing much drunkenness. *If* this is the case, it ought to be observed, however, that this evil cannot be prevented by any regulating of the sale of spirits by retail. If the economic conditions of the working classes have so improved, that they can afford to buy liquors of superior quality, their disposition for intemperance and drunkenness can in no way be depending upon the localities where the liquors have been procured. Wherever the intoxicants have been sold — by the Company or by a wine- and spirit firm — it is quite impossible to control the use of them. It is of importance for the Company to prevent a retailing of spirits by which, by means of clubbing, the homes of the workmen are turned into public-houses and the public places such as streets and squares become filled with drunken and disorderly individuals. But who believes that a stricter regulation of the sale of spirits by retail could do more than this for the promotion of sobriety and public order, believes too much; it is an unreasonable belief.

The Gothenburg system is not a system for the propagation of temperance among consumers of spirits; it is a system for the sale of spirits. It aims at a regulation of this sale and makes this sale subject to certain restrictions which have an exclusively moral purpose and are not of a probibitive character except in a few cases, especially mentioned by the Law.

This is a fact of which I have had to remind overzealous temperance reformers so often that I begin to feel it tedious. But it is an observation which in this case also seems to be necessary. A system for regulating the liquor trade cannot operate in the same way as an immediate work for temperance. It cannot produce such effects as are only possible by influences of educational, moral or religious character. But what the system really *can* do and what it *has* done is, however, so beneficial and so important that it deserves to be gratefully acknowledged by the Society.

* * *

Mr. Whyte tries entirely to depreciate the value of the statistics which have been supplied in order to give evidence of the beneficial effects, caused by the operations of the Gothenburg Company, because these statistics do not include what has been sold by five establishments with permanent licenses viz. the Exchange Restaurant, »The Mason's Lodge», Göta källare, Lorentzberg, and Siemen's Restaurant, neither the great quantity of spirits disposed of by the wine merchants holding licenses granted by the Company. I cannot agree with him, as it is undeniable that these statistics are a fairly adequate expression of the quantity of spirits consumed by the working classes. This has hitherto been admitted, even if the figures always have been and always must be only approximate.

But as it must be very interesting to study a statistical account, not limited to the spirit consumption of the working classes, I have on application received the following report, including not only the sales of the Company but also that of the five holders of »free» licenses and of the licensed wine- and spirit merchants. With regard to the two latter kinds of licenses the estimate is based upon the number of *litres* for which excise has been paid:

Year.	Population.	Number of *litres* sold by the Company.	Number of *litres* for which excise has been paid by wine- and spirit merchants.	Number of *litres* for which excise has been paid by the 5 private concerns.	Sum total of *litres*.	*Litres* per head of population.	*Litres*. sold per head of population by the Company alone.
1875	59,986	1,646,640,7	612,440,1	26,696,2	2,287,877	38,14	27,4
1876	61,505	1,746,755	612,440,1	26,696,2	2,385,891,3	38,79	28,4
1877	63,391	1,704,416,3	533,922,1	28,789,7	2,267,128,1	35,76	26,9
1878	65,697	1,629,441,3	612,440,1	28,789,7	2,270,671,1	34,56	24,8
1879	66,844	1,464,254,3	565,329,3	32,715,7	2,062,299,3	30,84	21,9
1880	68,477	1,383,450,5	456,712,8	32,715,7	1,872,879	27,35	20,2
1881	71,533	1,370,235,4	458,021,4	32,715,7	1,860,972,5	26,01	19,1
1882	72,555	1,285,222,2	478,959,5	34,024,3	1,698,206	24,77	17,7
1883	77,653	1,404,491,6	531,304,8	34,024,3	1,969,820,7	25,36	18,1
1884	80,811	1,469,918,2	547,008,4	34,024,3	2,050,950,7	25,38	18,2
1885	84,450	1,525,423,8	539,156,6	37,950,2	2,102,530,6	24,89	18,0
1886	88,230	1,566,671,8	512,984	40,000	2,119,655,8	24	17,8
1887	91,396	1,545,384,1	416,000	38,500	1,999,884,1	21,88	16,9
1888	94,370	1,580,926,3	416,000	42,500	2,039,426,3	20,94	16,7
1889	97,677	1,568,155,8	407,000	42,500	2,017,655,8	20,66	16,1
1890	101,502	1,622,663,3	407,000	42,000	2,071,663,8	20,41	15,9
1891	104,215	1,546,028,8	406,000	64,000	2,016,028,8	19,34	14,8
1892	106,356	1,441,517,2	406,000	48,100	1,895,617,2	17,82	13,5

I do not know whether Mr. Whyte will find these figures in favour of the opinion which he had given before he had seen them. From my point of view they still further confirm the conclusion which has been drawn out of the figures showing the quantity of spirits sold by the Company, viz. that in Gothenburg since 1875 *the amount of spirits sold per head of the population has been reduced with more than a half.* And for such a short period of time this diminution is indeed very significant.

Mr Whyte, however, is perhaps, in spite of all this, ready to say that even these figures prove the truth of his assertion, that the Gothenburg system has not been able to reduce to proper bounds the consumption of liquors within the community. But he

has overlooked that *sale* is not the same as *consumption*. And when comparing the Gothenburg Company's figures with those indicating the amount of spirits, sold per head of the population in several English towns, he may have forgotten to take into consideration, *for one thing* that no real value can be attached to a comparison between the sales in, on one side, a town with a Company, the books of which are open to inspection by the public and where the amount sold can be fully ascertained, and, on the other side, a town, where the sale is carried on by private concerns, the sales of which can never be accounted for — and *secondly*, that with regard to such a comparison it ought to be considered as well, whether the country communities, by which the compared towns are surrounded, have to the same extent prohibited within their territories the sale of spirits for consumption either off or on the premises. But all these circumstances are to be observed. It is an indisputable fact that a good deal of the liquors sold by the wine and spirit merchants is not consumed in Gothenburg as it is well known that they have customers in different parts of the whole Kingdom, to which considerable quantities are sent for consumption. It is still further a fact that the country parishes of the province of Gothenburg have used their right of prohibition with regard to the liquor traffic so energetically that in the rural districts of the province there are only *one* license for the sale of spirits for consumption off the premises and *five* for consumption on the premises and all these five latter licenses are held by permanent tenures, and, therefore, without the reach of the prohibitive power. And if I call attention to the fact that the rural parishes of Lundby and Örgryte, which form the vicinity of Gothenburg and have a very great population of workmen, have entirely prohibited the liquor traffic, and that at the great factory of Mölndal, belonging to the parish of Fässberg and situated at a distance of not more than three (English) miles from Gothenburg there is not a single drink shop, it will be easily understood to what a great extent the *sale of spirits in Gothenburg represents the spirit consumption of other places*. If I add that Gothenburg is a selling-place where a great many fishers and sailors from the coast come together, and a seaport town that supplies provisions to a great number of vessels, the crews of which are often — I am sorry to

say — very constant frequenters of the public-houses, the incorrectness of identifying the sale of spirits in Gothenburg with the consumption of spirits by inhabitants of the same town becomes obvious.

If this circumstance is overlooked, the returns of the companies may lead to the most unreasonable conclusions. I beg to illustrate this with a very striking instance. In the province of Westmanland there are four little towns of which the two greater are Westerås, with a population of a little more than 8,000, and Sala with about 6,000 inhabitants; in both these towns there are »Brandy Companies» which during the year 1891—92 sold resp. 350,763 and 326,130 *litres*, i. e. about 43 *litres* per head of the population in Westerås and about 54 *litres* per head in Sala. Now, are we to believe that there is such an enormous consumption of spirits in these two towns? By no means; the great sale of these companies is very easily accounted for by the fact that in the whole province there is only one license for the sale of spirits in the country. The sale of spirits in the above-mentioned towns thus represents the greater part of the consumption of spirits in the whole province. And the consumption per head of the population in the whole province is found to be 7,24 *litres*.

Now, if the method of identifying the sale of spirits in a certain place with the consumption of spirits in the same place is unreasonable with regard to Westerås and Sala, it is quite as unreasonable with regard to Gothenburg. According to the same calculation as in the former case, the consumption of spirits in the province of Gothenburg was for the year in question 8,50 *litres* per head.

I suppose, however, that Mr. Whyte will compare this figure with a very low figure, showing the consumption of spirits per head of population in some English town. If he does so, I can only repeat what has been said above: every comparison between the sale of spirits in, on one side, a town with a company and, on the other, a town, where the sale is carried on by private agencies, is really impossible. It is only the sale of a company that can be exactly ascertained, while the returns of private sale usually are based upon vague suppositions and conjectures.

I shall corroborate also this assertion by some illustrations from my own country. Scania (Skåne), our southernmost province, is divided in the county of Malmöhus and the county of Christianstad. In these counties and especially in the latter a great number of distilleries are situated and not less than 49,49 per cent. of the total amount of spirits, distilled in the year 1891—1892, came from this province. This being the case, it is obvious that in this province spirits cannot take such a subordinate part among intoxicants as it does in the other provinces of the Kingdom. This will also appear from the following facts. While in more than twelve counties out of twenty-four the licenses for the sale of spirits in the country are limited to a number of between 0 to 4, in seven counties to a number of between 6 to 10, in two counties do not exceed 15 and in one, that of Malmöhus, 26, the rural communities of the county of Christianstad have granted not less than 44 such licenses. Now, there are, moreover, 25 Company licenses in the towns belonging to this county. It seems, therefore, very natural to assume that there must be a very large consumption of spirits in this part of the Kingdom. But if the amount of spirits which, according to the accounts of the companies, has been sold by these, is added to the quantity of spirits which, according to the fees, paid for the country licenses at public auctions,[1] has been sold by private agencies, we shall find to our great astonishment that the consumption of spirits per head of the population in the county of Christianstad *does not amount to more than* 2,20 *litres*, in other words, that the county, in which the greatest number of country licenses (always held by private persons) have been granted and in which the largest amount of spirits is manufactured should take *the next lowest place* of all the counties of the Kingdom. In this respect it is exceeded only by the county of *Westerbotten*, in the northernmost part of Sweden where there are no distilleries and where only five licenses have been granted in the whole district, of which 4 are held by companies in towns and 1 by the keeper of a privileged tavern in the country. In this county with only 5 licenses the consumption of spirits is 1,90 *litres* per head of the population. How is it

[1] »Licenses, granted in rural districts, shall be offered at public auction by the bailiff, for the period of time (at most three years) fixed by the governor, to the person or persons willing to pay a tax on the greatest number of *litres*.»

possible that in the county of Christianstad with 69 licenses the per capita consumption of spirits should not amount to more than 2,20 *litres*?! This figure, it appears, is quite unreasonable. But how explain it?

That is easy enough. The figures are more or less correct according to the extent in which the sale is conducted by companies. But in the same proportion as the sale of the companies only forms part of the whole quantity sold, it becomes more and more difficult to calculate the real amount of this quantity, and the smaller the share is which the companies have in the sale, the more inaccurate the figures are. Out of 238,110 *litres*, sold in *Westerbotten* during 1891—1892, 230,865 *litres* have been sold by companies. This being the case, the amount, sold by private concerns, does not influence the calculation of the consumption which, therefore, must be considered as reliable. But out of 484,668 *litres* sold in the county of Christianstad not more than 125,610 *litres* have been disposed of by companies. The greatest part has been sold by private agencies. If, therefore, the consumption per head has been estimated at 2,20 *litres*, this calculus has no other worth than to show clearly that there is very little correspondence between the number of *litres*, called in at the auctions where the licenses are offered, and the number of *litres*, really sold, or, in other words, it shows the incorrectness of a calculus of the amount of spirits sold, based upon the amount of fees, paid for the private licenses.

It will surely not astonish Mr. Whyte, if I believe such cases to be possible in other parts of the world and if I must, for that reason, reject every comparison between the accounts of companies which are under the control of the public, and more or less conjectural calculations in regard to the sales of private agencies.

* * *

It is very ingenious of Mr. Whyte to make the portion of the profits, derived from the sale of spirits in the towns which goes to the municipalities, a measure of their part of the consumption. But however acute this conception may be, it is without the slightest foundation. Hence all the conclusions which he has based upon this supposition, are false. It has been ascertained that three-fifts of the total annual sale of spirits is made by companies, but

to account for how great a part of these spirits is consumed by the population of the towns has not yet been possible and, I dare say, the solution of this problem will always be very difficult, if not impossible. The distribution of the profits of the companies is made according to quite other principles.

* * *

It seems to me as if it must be admitted that, if the consumption of »superior spirits» has increased among the working classes during the last years, this would also have the result, that the Company would have had during the same time an increased sale of such spirits. I cannot see why it should be reasonable to presume that it is only the wine- and spirit merchants who have supplied these »superior spirits» to the working classes inasmuch as the figures, above referred to, show that their sale during the last nine years has been steadily decreasing. Now, on investigation whether this part of the sale of Company has during the same period of time increased or fallen off, I find that the sale which in 1875 and 1876 was 2,3 *litres* per head and up to 1883 had continuously been on the decreased in 1884 remained fixe, at the same figure as in the last mentioned year or 1,3 *litre* per head, that, thereafter, during 1885—1887 it showed an annual decrease of 0,10 *litre* per head and that, after it had remained at 1 *litre* per head during 1888, it has been during 1889—1892 resp. 1,1, 1,1, 1,3 and 1,1 *litres* per head. It is quite evident that these figures do not confirm such an explanation of the causes of the increasing drunkenness, as has been given Mr. Whyte after his interview with the chief of police of the town.

These causes are to be looked for elsewhere, and according to Mr. Whyte himself, the principal cause has in the first place and without hesitation been pointed out to him by the said official. It is the rising consumption of beer, it is the common use of malt liquors as intoxicants which offers an explanation, both simple and correct, of the singular phenomenon that, while the consumption of spirits is sinking, drunkenness is increasing. To our ancestors the intoxicating nature of beer was so well known that — as I have often remarked — *Odin* himself preaches temperance in *Havamal* and says about the beer that it is »not so good for mankind», as it was said to be, because it could »deaden the senses of men». Our laws not

only of the mediæval age but also of much later times testify to the same. After the invention of spirits and the increasing use of them the consumption of beer diminished by and by. The memory of its injurious effects disappeared also, and during the agitation against the spirits in the years about 1830—1840 the temperance reformers generally pointed out the beer as a suitable substitute for spirits. It is a real fact that during this time breweries were built with the definite purpose of promoting temperance, and the places, where beer was sold and served out, were called »temperance houses». It was, however, but natural, that the taste for the strong drink (*bränvin* or native Swedish brandy), which was generally used and which should, according to the law, contain 46 percent. of alcohol — it is only a few years back since the percentage of alcohol was lowered to 40 — should soon demand a strong beer, and an industry which is quite free and which is wholly dependent of the taste of the public for its economical existence, must suit the taste of the public. So the beer is made fit to resume its old rank of an intoxicant. And in the same degree as the spirits are displaced, they are succeeded by the beer: the consumption of spirits falls off but drunkenness increases. The explanation of this is — I repeat it — that the consumption of beer has enormously increased.

I beg to call attention to the following figures which are to be found in the reports of the Royal Swedish Statistical Bureau:

Year.	Number of licences for the sale of spirits		Consumption of spirits in the whole Kingdom		Average of fees per head (in swedish crowns.)	Number of convictions for drunkenness		Sum total of convictions.
	in towns.	on the country.	*litres.*	per head.		in towns.	in the country.	
1885...	1,005	234	39,364,133	8,4	4,64	16,432	1,875	18,307
1886...	997	224	37,009,697	7,8	4,44	18,197	1,898	20,095
1887...	961	214	33,275,155	7,0	4,15	19,083	2,030	21,113
1888...	968	212	31,964,588	6,7	4,58	19,331	1,757	21,082
1889...	971	210	29,570,674	6,2	4,45	20,994	1,910	22,904
1890...	958	186	33,478,019	7,0	5	22,968	2,188	25,156
1891...	962	178	30,957,403	6,4	4,63	23,312	2,536	25,848
1892...	865	172	31,253,103	6,5	4,80	24,907	2,818	27,725

Between the principal groups of these figures there is no connection. Even if the supply of spirits, the number of licenses for the sale of spirits and the consumption thereof are diminishing — without alteration of the amount of fees — the number of convictions for drunkenness increases both in the towns and in the country. How is this singular fact to be accounted for?

Intoxicating drinks are perhaps sold without a license, somebody may remark. Well, let us see. I refer to the following statistics, which are also official. The six northern provinces are the provinces of Kopparberg, Gefleborg, Westernorrland, Jemtland, Westerbotten and Norrbotten.

These figures show that in the six northern provinces the sale of spirits without a license is more common than such sale of beer, while in the other provinces — on the whole[1] — the case is reverse:

Number of convictions for illegal sale of spirits.				Number of convictions for illegal sale of beer.		
Year.	In the six northern provinces.	In the other provinces.	Sum total.	In the six northern provinces.	In the other provinces.	Sum total.
1885.....	490	328	818	361	981	1,342
1886.....	423	347	770	348	994	1,342
1887.....	465	353	818	343	941	1,284
1888.....	440	371	811	327	950	1,277
1889.....	435	274	709	345	1,137	1,482
1890.....	439	374	813	332	1,147	1,479
1891.....	502	395	897	308	1,104	1,412
1892.....	391	451	842	346	1,028	1,374

And if it is taken into consideration, how much the number of actions for illegal sale of beer exceeds the number of actions for illegal sale of spirits and if its is also taken into consideration

[1] The Province of Westernorrland with a great population of workmen, especially at the sawmills in the district of Sundsvall, makes an exception. There the actions against sale of beer without a license are more numerous than those against such illegal sale of spirits.

that not only the number of legally granted licenses for the sale of beer is much greater than that of licenses for the sale of spirits, but also that beer is sold in almost every country shop in the whole Kingdom so that these shops very often are a sort of country public houses, it seems impossible to me to shut the eyes to the fact, corroborated by practical experience, that the consumption of beer is enormously increasing while, on the other hand, the consumption of spirits is decreasing. And as it is well known that illegal sale of either spirits or beer seldom is detected and still more seldom is reported upon for legal investigation unless the attention of the authorities is attracted to it by the drunkenness and disorderly conduct of the population, I cannot but point out these statistics as a confirmation of the truth of the statement, very often heard, especially in the Diet, that the beer just as well as the spirits is the cause of the great harm which is done to our people by the consumption of intoxicating drinks.

In this connection I may be permitted to call attention to the following statements made by individuals, charged with drunkenness by the Police Court of Gothenburg, concerning the places where they had been drinking before being found drunk.

Year.	Company's public-houses.	Beer shops.	Private houses.	Not accounted for.
1875.....	890	130	335	1,026
1876.....	1,067	263	357	856
1877.....	1,142	305	406	867
1878.....	1,023	269	327	845
1879.....	1,070	301	234	713
1880.....	851	397	303	770
1881.....	914	445	292	897
1882.....	839	442	292	805
1883.....	899	523	370	801
1884.....	773	419	355	1,114
1885.....	727	483	330	1,183

Year.	Company's public-houses.	Beer shops.	Private houses.	Not accounted for.
1886	798	582	358	1,240
1887	840	614	464	1,174
1888	688	679	549	1,215
1889	765	753	574	1,371
1890	1,061	763	960	1,590
1891	1,197	799	1,202	1,734
1892	1,005	1,231	819	1,469

I ask: do not these figures very significantly illustrate the history of the attempts of the beer to displace the spirits, to become more and more used and to regain its old reputation as an intoxicant? It seems very innocent and modest, when first beginning the rise. In the middle of »the seventies» when all patriots were inspired with fear by the increasing drunkenness, the victims of the beer shops were only a *seventh* of those of the brandy shops. Since that time the contingents of the former »temperance houses» to the growing army of habitual drunkards have steadily increased and *exceed* now with more than two hundreds the tribute of the public-houses to this lamentable crowd. I need not point out what a preponderant share the beer must have in the figures of the third column. The brandy-flasks have been more and more succeeded by the beer bottles which are sold in any number by the provision dealers of the towns and by almost every country shopkeeper. And as it is forbidden by law to consume the beer in these shops, it is usually brought to the private houses or very often drunk out in gateways and entrance halls, in streets and lanes. It is in order to put a stop to this nuisance that the free sale of malt liquors has been limited to a minimum of 10 litres by a Royal Ordinance, issued on the 2:nd of June this year. The purpose of this ordinance is evidently to support the communities in their struggle against the beer.

Mr. Whyte, however, is of opinion that the Company system has done and can do very little to counteract drunkenness, as it is unmistakable that, in spite of the operations of the system drunken-

ness has considerably increased, and as it is a fact that a good deal of the drunkenness arises from the growing consumption of beer, I believe that such a conclusion is inaccurate. If the beer is used as an intoxicant in the country where no spirits are to be bad the cause of this is very obvious. But if this is also the case in the towns where spirits are sold both in the public-houses and in the shops of the licensed wine- and spirit merchants, this must have a special reason. Now, this reason is to be found in the restrictions with which the sale of the companies is combined. The hindrances and difficulties which by the Company *itself*, partly in accordance with, partly beyond the prescriptions of the Law, are put in the way of the intemperate masses have led these masses to the use of beer which is, as has been shown, much more easy to procure. And this is the cause of the growing consumption of it. This fact, however, is to me an evidence of the success of the system; its shows that the system *has worked in such a manner as it was expected to do* and, under the present state of things, it seems to me as if it would be a very prudent measure to *extend* — as was done in 1873 on account of the clubbing — the application of the system by bringing under the control of the same also the sale of malt liquors.

It is evident that such a measure would be vehemently opposed by mighty private interests. Most of our breweries are owned by companies, and capitalists, belonging to all classes of the society, have invested their money in brewery shares. These and a great many other people who live on this trade in some way or other will surely oppose every reform which they may find disadvantageous to their economical interests. They will do it with the more force, inasmuch as they are sure to characterize it as an unjustifiable measure to make the opportunity of obtaining beer difficult for hundred thousands of temperate and irreproachable members of the society only for the sake of the intemperate ten thousands. But against such objections it must be pointed out with great emphasis that since actually *two* kinds of intoxicating drinks are generally used in this country and since both in about the same degree cause the grievances which always accompany the consumption of intoxicating drinks, it is unreasonable to place the sale of one of them under the controling influence of a very strict legi lation and leave

the sale of the other altogether free. The result of such an irrational method must be that the liquors which are more easy to procure have an increased consumption. But is the cause of sobriety promoted in this way? Can it be in the interest of the State to increase the opportunities of getting drunk by intemperate consumption of malt liquors and why should it be assumed that intoxation from beer should be more advantageous than that which is caused by immoderate drinking of spirits? This is the more unreasonable as the State suffers hereby. However indifferent the State may be with regard to the moral side of the question, it must see that the public revenues, derived from excise on spirits, are diminished as much as the masses leave off drinking spirits and instead of spirits use malt-liquors for which no excise at all is paid. It must be made apparent to everybody that such a premium, given to certain part of the sale and consumption of intoxicating drinks, has no purpose at all and that it must be to the advantage of all parties, if the manufacture and sale of all kinds of intoxicants — distilled or fermented — is made subject to the same regulations and restrictions. The managers of the public-houses of the Gothenburg Company have formerly had the privilege of selling strong malt beverages, such as beer and stout, on their own account in connection with the bar trade in spirits. But this privilege has now been withdrawn, and all kinds of malt liquors, disposed of in the Company public-houses, are sold according to the same rules as have been stipulated for the sale of spirits. This measure on the part of the Company is a first step in the direction now indicated. An excise duty must be paid on beer, if possible according to the percentage of alcohol contained in it. The sale of beer ought to be regulated in the same way as the sale of spirits, and fees ought to be paid for the licenses for sale either on or off the premises. I have no doubt that such a measure would produce the same beneficial effects as were brought on by the reforms of the period 1855—1865 with regard to spirits. And in this connection I want to call attention to another question which has been much debated among our temperance reformers, viz. whether it is promotive of temperance that the public-houses are also eating-houses for workmen. I believe that this problem would have its best solution, and that the reform above referred to would be more complete and effective if the so called workmens' restaurants were

arranged in the places where beer is sold and if it were forbidden to sell beer in the brandy shops and, of course, brandy in the beer shops. It has been ascertained by observations, made during many years, that the drinking of spirits and beer at the same time makes people drunk in the shortest time, and that those who have been intoxicated in this manner always are the most disorderly and dangerous to the public safety. This fact is another reason, why spirits and beer should not be sold in the same place but in different shops. It is easily understood that much more could be said in favour of such an arrangement.

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From the point of view of Mr. Whyte it is an error that, according to the Swedish Law, cooked food always must be kept on hand in public-houses where the sale of spirits for consumption on the premises is carried on. He considers the combination of the sale of food and alcoholic drink as a failure. For my part I must admit that it is most advantageous if our workmen take their meals in eating-houses where they are not met by the temptations of the drink shop, but I feel bound to remind of the fact that the law in question has a philanthropic motive, since medical scientists have affirmed that the alcoholic poison is less injurious to the human organism if it is consumed together with food. We find the same philanthropic motive in the report of the committee which in 1864 was appointed by the Gothenburg Town Council to inquire into the pauperism of the town and by which committee the new system for regulating the liquor traffic, now generally known as the Gothenburg system, was first proposed. In the 3rd clause of this report it is proposed, that the public-houses of the companies should be so arranged that they might »hence forward serve, more than hitherto, as eating-houses for the working classes where hot, prepared food is to be provided, at least at stated meal-times.» I believe that this point of the system ought to be very carefully examined before it is rejected. Even the habitual drunkard, that poor fellow who *cannot* eat without a dram, even he is a fellow-creature whose interests are to be looked after in a friendly way. A sober and sound workman can eat everywhere, but if the food is taken away from the public-house, it is also taken away from the drun-

kard who is thus deprived of the possibility of counteracting, in a certain measure at least, the injurious influences of alcohol. In this manner the life of a man may be prolonged, and if his life is longer, the hope of his rescue is greater. Is it an *error* that the Law also looks after the interests of the consumers of spirits, after the needs of the drunkard? If the State derives an income of many millions from their consumption of spirits, is it an *error* that the State by means of a legal precept of this kind tries to lessen their speed on the road to ruin? I do not believe it. I have not always been of the same opinion with regard to this question. But after I had listened to what a man who had been a drunkard had to say about this at a temperance meeting I was reminded of the duty even for temperance workers to remember the demands of *mercy*, and I believe that, if this is done, the law in question will be looked upon in another light than it was before.

But this arrangement is nevertheless a failure, says Mr. Whyte, since there are many public-houses where no meals are served, and since it generally is a very small number of public-house visitors who ask for food even there where it may be obtained so that this part of the business is carried on at a heavy loss. It must be admitted that the supplying of food in public-houses is of minor importance in such places where it has been shown by experience that the workmen do not go to the public-houses in order to take their meals, but *where* this is a custom among them this point of the system is of great importance, and food must be supplied even if it »does not pay». This is to be done from a philanthropic point of view. The legislators have deemed fair that those who carry on a business in which such a great profit is derived from the craving for spirits of its deplorable customers should always be bound to supply food to those who ask for such, even if this department of the business is carried on at a loss. And I also want to remind of the fact that even keepers of fashionable restaurants cannot derive any profit from the sale of food. The success of their business is wholly depending upon the amount of spirituous drinks, consumed on their premises. For my part I must characterize it as an act of crying injustice to supply food in the restaurants of the upper classes, in spite of the losses, but take it away from such public-houses as are frequented by the working classes, because it does not pay. The sale of food may be carried on

at a loss also in the public-houses; the profit will nevertheless, I am sorry to say, be great enough. The business, as a whole, very seldom proves a failure. And neither the companies nor their public-house managers have, as far as I know, ever complained of the rule that food shall always be kept on hand. The supposition of Mr. Whyte that the four eating-houses of the Gothenburg Company which are directly under the care of the same and in which spirits are permitted to be used only with meals should make the sale of food which in other public-houses is carried on by the servants of the Company on their own account quite impossible as a business has no foundation whatever as far as I can understand. Those who ought to know it have never said anything about it. In order to make it plain that the sale of food cannot possibly be carried on at a loss by the public-house managers which are in the service of the Company, I refer to the 22:nd clause of the contracts between the Company and their managers of bars. This is the wording of it: »On the same day, every third month, the manager shall receive at the Company's office the amount in cash which the directors, after due consideration, have fixed as compensation for the unavoidable expenses incurred by him in carrying on the Company's business during said three months; account must also be taken of the number of servants he has to keep for attending to the business, their food, maintenance, and wages, such of the outlay for lighting, heating, and cleaning the premises as may fairly fall to the Company's share, and finally the remuneration which the directors may see fit to assign to the manager for the punctual and conscientious observance of his obligations which include providing food and keeping a restaurant adapted to the needs of the different premises.» The managers do not pay any rent for the premises and as servants of the Company they have free lodgings in the Company's houses.

I do not believe, therefore, that Mr. Whyte has with due carefulness considered the judgment which he, against the Bishop of Chester, has given with regard to this point of the Gothenburg system. The case is not conclusively proved by pointing out that there is a great number of workmen who do not avail themselves of the opportunity which is offered. I suppose, that »The United Kingdom Alliance» sends out its orators and distributes many tracts

and books, although most of the drunkards of the United Kingdom do not care either to hear the former nor read the latter; but nevertheless the work of the Alliance deserves much praise, even if it is not »a success» looked upon »from a pecuniary point of view». But it is not to be considered from this point of view, Mr. Whyte will no doubt say. I not only admit this but I declare, moreover, that, from a higher point of view than that of the account-book, the work of the Alliance surely will be found very valuable; for I believe, that there will be much on the credit side of also this Alliance, when on Judgment Day »the books» are opened and the works of charity — even the most insignificant — of all times and generations shall be judged by Him who has said that no man is profited, even if he gains the whole world, if thereby a single soul is lost. And from this point of view, I dare to reject an opinion which on account of a loss of 10,000 crowns (Swedish: *kronor*) on the sale of food of a public-house company declares »its contribution to the establishment of a constructive policy» to be a failure. If only that *one* whose words have above been referred to had been rescued through the supply of food by the companies — I could even for this reason dispute the propriety of Mr. Whyte's judgment. But he does not stand alone. He stands as an advocate for all the great crowds which, more or less but always in *some* degree, have made advantage of the law in question and of the efforts of the company system to give effect to the same. Therefore, even if the greater part of our workmen will leave the public-houses and go to other eating-houses — and it is my sincere hope that this may happen — I dare to predict that a long time will elapse before our legislators annul the law in question, this law which Mr. Whyte has designated as a failure and in pursuance of which the Gothenburg System, without regard to the losses, always leaves to the option of the customers of the public-house to make it an eating-house.

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Mr. Whyte tells us that when visiting one of the Gothenburg Company's public-houses he has seen himself that spirits were supplied to a man, already intoxicated. Well, that I have

seen myself. I once went into a public-house and asked the manager if he would permit me to superintend together with him the serving out of spirits to the numerous customers who were just coming in. We took up our position just inside the door, every new-comer thus passing muster before us. On account of the hazy eyes, the unsteady gait or the general appearance of several of the men, I said to the manager that they were not sober; the manager, however, said that they were so. He knew them. They always looked like that, though they were not drunk and he could not refuse to serve out the drams, which they asked for. In *one* single case I was right. Some other men, however, who had not attracted my attention, almost immediately after having swallowed their drams, showed unmistakable signs of intoxication, probably because they were hungry or starved. I left the place with a depressing sense of the impossibily of preventing such mistakes and it may be, that Mr. Whyte is right when saying that the habit of serving public-house customers has a deadening effect upon the servants, that in the daily routine they become so unobservant that they do not see, whether a customer is sober or drunk. But a great number of complaints, made by customers, because they have been refused to have spirits served to them, give evidence that the servants have carefully tried to do their duty in this respect. And even if sometimes they have failed to do so, I cannot but believe that such mistakes must be *much more frequent*, when the sale of spirits is conducted by a private publican who derives profit out of it, than when this sale is carried on by a salaried manager who for the sake of his own welfare must do his best to avoid them.

With regard to this question Mr. Whyte has made several statements which require some critical examination. He says that during the six years 1875—1880 a yearly average of 1007 persons, charged with drunkenness in Gothenburg, had stated that they obtained their drink in the Company's houses; and having found out that the average population of Gothenburg for these years was about 63,000, he says that »this yearly average of 1,007 charged with drunkenness from the Company's houses, was about as many as would have been charged altogether in any town of a similar population in England.» And citing Mr. Reginald Mortimer as his authority, he informs us that in a Swedish city the police have not power to arrest for

drunkenness, unless it is accompanied by violent or disorderly conduct.

With regard to the population of Gothenburg it ought to be observed that for the time in question one census was taken by the tax collectors according to the number of persons for whom capitation tax was paid and another census by the clergy according to the parish register. And before the reforms with regard to the registration which have now been introduced there was a difference of several thousand persons between the returns of the tax collectors office and the returns of the clergy. In 1870, for instance, the population of Gothenburg was estimated by the tax collectors' office at a number of 53,822 persons and by the clergy at a number of 56,288 persons, and in 1880 their resp. numbers were 68,477 and 76,401. I do not know why the Gothenburg Company has from the beginning chosen the figures of the tax collectors' office for its comparative statistics, though I find it quite correct that, after such a beginning, these figures have been continually used. According to my opinion, however, it would have been more correct to take the figures from the returns of the clergy, which according to our Supreme Court of Judicature are to be considered as official and surely are the most accurate. If this is observed, the average number which Mr. Whyte has taken for the population of Gothenburg is by far too low. And as for the comparison with the number of convictions for drunkenness in a similar English town, I come back to what has already been stated with regard to the prohibition of the sale of spirits in the neighbouring rural districts. My inquiries into the share of the rural population in the number of convictions for drunkenness in Gothenburg, have shown that during the years 1879—1881 this share was a third of the whole number and later inquiries have led to about the same result.

But Mr. Whyte's method of putting the 1,007 persons, intoxicated in the public-houses of the Company, in relation to the population of the town urges me to remind of a fact which usually is not taken in due consideration. While in a number, representing the population of a town, every inhabitant represents only one person, this is not case with regard to the numbers of convictions for drunkenness or cases of intoxication in the Company's public-houses. In these numbers one person can be represented many times. In 1892,

for inst., one man was 12 times convicted for drunkenness by the Police Court in Gothenburg, and a woman 15 times. The returns of the Police Court in Stockholm show that in 1891 two men were fined for drunkenness 17 times each and one person 19 times. Of 4,563 convictions for drunkenness in Gothenburg during 1892 only 2,521 represent the same number of persons, the remaining 2,042 cases have reference to not more than 683 persons which have been summoned before the Court 2 to 15 times. Out of 15,312 offences against the law on intoxication in Stockholm during the years 1889—1891 a number of 11,569 have been committed by as many persons; the remaining 3,743 have been committed by a much smaller number of persons which have been arrested from 2 up to 49 times during said year. It is quite the same case with regard to those intoxicated in a Company's public-houses. A comparison, therefore, between their number and the population of the town in question is nothing less than misleading if the purpose of the comparison is to test the efficiency of the control which is to be exercised in the Company public-houses. For such a purpose we have to find out a relation not between *intoxicated* customers of the public-houses and the population of Gothenburg but between intoxicated and *not intoxicated* customers. We have to find out the number of those who have visited the public-houses without getting drunk and this figure is to be compared with the above-mentioned 1,007 intoxicated public-house visitors. There are, of course, no returns available from which such a figure could be taken, but it is not impossible to imagine its approximate proportions. Supposing that a man usually visits the public-house four times a week to quench his craving for spirits which then is not of that strong character which would lead him to the public-house several times a day, the number of his visits to the public-house during year would be 208. Supposing further that out of the population of the town during the year in question, viz. the 70,000 inhabitants of Gothenburg, a number of about 5,000 visited the public-houses 208 times a year, the number of customers to whom the *employés* of the Company would have to serve out spirits at the bar according to the regulations would be 1,040,000. If the customers from the rural districts, the coast and the ships in the harbour are added and their number is estimated at 1,500 and if their visits are supposed to be two a week, the whole number of public-

house visits will amount of 1,196,000. It is with a figure of about *this* size with which the number of cases of intoxication in the public-houses of the Company, or 1,007, is to be compared, for the mistakes, above referred to, have been made in 1,007 cases out of 1,196,000 i. e. not one on the thousand. However deplorable such mistakes may be, it is, however, easy to imagine that they are possible, if the actual number of visitors, even at a very low estimate, is taken into consideration.

Concerning the Law on intoxication in Sweden, Mr. Mortimer has made a statement which has been cited and believed by Mr. Whyte. This statement is easily refuted by referring to the penal statute, which is applicable to offences of this kind. The 15th clause of the 18th chapter of the Penal Law of Sweden runs as follows: »Every person who through abuse of strong drink becomes intoxicated to such an extent that it becomes noticeable from his actions or befuddled state of mind that he is drunk, and is found in this condition on a highway, street, or other public place, shall be fined, up to 20 crowns [= 22 sh. 3 d.], for drunkenness.» Thus, according to this law, it is *only* the drunken condition which is punished. Disorderly or violent conduct is especially punished according to the 15th clause of the 11th chapter of the same Law without regard to the intoxicated or not intoxicated condition of the trespasser.

As Mr. Whyte has cited Mr. Mortimer as an authority, I suppose that he will also accept other statements, made by Mr. Mortimer. For this reason I feel called upon to inquire into a table of statistics, showing the number of convictions for drunkenness and the number of paupers which is to be found in his little pamphlet, »The Gothenburg Licensing System.»

Everybody who has any knowledge of international statistics is well aware of the impossibility of founding arguments on figures of this kind, when the methods of their collecting and classification are unknown. But since Mr. Mortimer has not given the slightest information of the principles according to which the returns of the board of guardians in Gothenburg are made up, but only compares the sums total of these returns with other sums, he does not seem to understand the impossibility of a comparison of figures which are not added up according to the same principles. I find it very

curious, however, that Mr. Mortimer who has himself visited Gothenburg has not by his own personal enquiries, made on the spot, been led to doubts with regard to a figure which, from his point of view, would imply that 10 percent. of the population of Gothenburg are paupers. But his inquiries have not had this result. He has published the figure under the title: »number of paupers.»

This is an error inasmuch as the figure is an expression not of the *number of paupers* in Gothenburg but of the *number of helps or gifts, given during the year to the poor* in Gothenburg by the board of guardians of the town.

As has been shown above with regard to the number of convictions for drunkenness and cases of intoxication in the public-houses of the Company, the same persons can be represented several times in numbers of this kind. And this is especially the case with the »number of paupers». Every time when any relief is given to the same person during a year, this is registered as a *new* relief which it really is; from this one must not infer that the person receiving relief always is a new person. But according to »the statement of facts», made by Mr. Mortimer, it must be so, however unreasonable it may be.

As an illustration of the registering system of the board of guardians in Gothenburg I beg to quote the following lines which I have received from a person, well acquainted with these questions. He writes as follows: »If a family consisting of 8 persons, husband, wife and 6 children enjoy relief for inst. by payment of rent, this is registered as relief, given to 8 persons. If the same man falls ill and becomes incapable of work, and the whole family is taken to the poor-house, this is also considered as relief to 8 persons; if the six children are put out to board in the country, they are registered under a new head. In this way a family of 8 persons can represent a number of 22 in the returns and if the husband or the wife are discharged from the poor-house as able to work for some time of the year and then received there anew, the figure becomes still higher.»

Now, I ask: are the registers of the boards of guardians in England made up according to these principles? If not, I dare to say that every comparison between the total amounts is unfair and impossible. Those who are real experts in statistics will always find

such a comparison a rather difficult problem, even if the returns are made up according to the same system, inasmuch as not only arithmetical but also different social conditions and national peculiarities must be taken into consideration.

Mr. Mortimer has left his readers »to form their own opinions» on basis of the statistics, that are given in his pamphlet. I suppose, that, after these informations,his readers will find themselves obliged to put off the matter until further.

* * *

I have no doubt that Mr. Whyte is mistaken when saying that the year 1876 has with a wise design been taken as a »starting point» in the statements which are made with regard to the effects of the Gothenburg system. He tells us that these effects, or the steady diminution in the consumption of spirits, were not brought on by the system but ought to be attributed to the decrease of prosperity. In support of his opinion he refers to a statement by Sir F. R. Plunkett that during the first ten years of the existence of the Company system the cause of public order and morality had not prospered in Gothenburg, and that therefore many people were ready to pronounce the system a failure.

Both these assertions require some examination. As for the latter I beg to call attention to the verdict of the auditors, appointed by the County Agricultural Society and the Town Council to investigate the accounts and management of the Company during the year 1869. In their report of March 1870 they say: — »In consideration of the decided improvement, effected by the laudable and consistent arrangements of the Company, although such a great quantity of intoxicating drinks is consumed in the public-houses of the Company, it is obvious that there has been a considerable decrease of drunkenness and therefore also of vice and crime in our town. Hence the auditors are fully convinced that few, if any institutions have deserved the gratitude of the community in such a high degree, or exercised such a salutary influence on it, as the above named Company, by taking the public-house traffic in its own hands».

So the effects of the system were judged of in 1870. But it was just at this time that the competition of the wine- and spirit merchants began to be severely felt. While in the operations of the Company only 33 licenses were made use of, these merchants had in their hands 45 licenses which they had bought at auctions for prices that were much lower than the value of the amount of spirits which they could dispose of. The result of this was that, in wild competition with one another and with the Company, they began to reduce the prices in an unreasonable way, to sell on credit and for distribution among »clubbing» parties. The Company, on the contrary, that had to pay tax on the total amount of spirits sold, and in all its operations was dependent of the object in view, viz. to counteract drunkenness among the working classes, was, in this state of things, unable to prove such a success as it had been expected to do. At the same time the abnormal increase in prosperity was at its height; the workmen had their wages raised and their hours reduced. It is obvious that also these circumstances rendered the realization of the object of the Company still more difficult. And I have no doubt at all that many honest people at this time were ready to pronounce the Company system a failure. But if such a question had been put to these honest people whether they wished the system to be abolished and to return to the former state of things, I dare say that, alarmed at the very thought of it, they would have answered the question with a very emphatic *no*.

And, indeed, I do not wonder at such an answer in the negative. However despondent they might have been at the sight of the drunkenness, which was ever increasing in spite of the Company system, they could not deny, that if also the licenses for the sale of spirits at the bar were to be sold by auction, the drinking on credit and all other evils caused by the competition of private publicans would soon return, the new neat and clean premises in which good order was maintained would have disappeared and there would again have been dark, dirty and unhealthy hovels with the coarse life and brutal fights of former times. The incomes which, as a sort of compensation, were derived from the public-house traffic by the communities to which this traffic caused so much trouble and expense would have gone to the publicans and the capitalists who secretly had advanced money to them, and ere long we would

have had a mighty class of wealthy public-house magnates. What would these honest people or the society or the cause of temperance have gained by that? If the matter is calmly thought over, I am sure that the result of it will always be the decided *no* which I have anticipated.

It was not even proposed to give up the Company system, but on the contrary, the application of it was extented. Does any one believe that this would have been done, if the system had been considered a *failure?*

At about the same time as the licenses for the retail trade in spirits were transferred on the Gothenburg Company in order to take away the injurious effects of the competition, above referred to, on the realization of the purposes of the Company and to give it a firmer position, the adoption of the system in Stockholm was, after long preparations, decided upon. On the 4:th of November 1876 the statutes of the Stockholm Public-House Licensing Company were sanctioned by the King. I do not believe that this would have happened, if the system had been looked upon as a failure.

With regard to the suggestion of Mr. Whyte that the year 1876 has been taken as a starting point, because at this time there was a change for the worse in the economic conditions of Sweden on which the increase or decrease of drunkenness were, according to his opinion, wholly dependent I suppose, that what has already been stated will offer sufficient reasons for taking this year as a starting point. I am fully convinced of the influence of the economic conditions on the liquor trade. I am of opinion that this influence is indisputable. But it is going too far to say that the rise or fall in the consumption of spirits and drunkenness is exclusively dependent upon the economic conditions. There are other circumstances that must be taken into consideration and among them the *manner* in which the liquor trade is conducted within a community. The restrictive influence of the Gothenburg system must be effective without regard to whether there is prosperity or dullness of trade. And that this theory viz that the falling off in drinking and drunkenness ought to be exclusively attributed to the decrease of prosperity, is an error, becomes still more obvious if we look on the experiences, made in Gothenburg during the last years. The dullness of trade which has prevailed there has it caused any decrease of drunkenness? Well the sale of spirits has diminished, but the drunkenness is greatly

increasing. I beg to call attention to the following table of statistics:

	Spirits, sold and served out at the bar, per head.	Spirits sold by retail (for consumption off the premiser), per head.	»Superior spirits», served out at the bar, per head.	Sale price of purified spirits sold at the bar.		Percentage of alcohol of purified spirits.	Number of convictions for drunkenness.
				per glass:	per *litre:*		
	litres:	*litres:*	*litres:*	öre.[1]	kronor.[2]	%	
1885	7,2	9,6	1,2	7	0,95	46,05	2,475
1886	7,2	9,5	1,1	7	0,95	46,05	2,776
1887	6,6	9,3	1,0	7	0,95	46,05	2,921
1888	6,4	9,3	1,0	8	1,00	45	2,922
1889	5,3	9,7	1,1	8	1,04	44	3,282
1890	5,2	9,6	1,1	8	1,04	44	4,010
1891	5,4	8,1	1,3	8	1,10	44	4,624
1892	4,9	7,6	1,0	8	1,10	44	4,563

Thus, the sale of spirits falls off, both at the bars and at the retailsale places, the prices are raised, the percentage of alcohol in spirits is lessened, the economic conditions are had. According to Mr. Whyte's theory, there ought to be a decrease of drunkenness now. But the theory does not hold good. The cases of drunkenness are increasing, as has been shown. What is the cause?

It has already been pointed out. It is the ever increasing sale of beer which is in no way placed under the restrictive and controling influence of the Company system.

Are we to believe that bad economic conditions have no influence upon the consumption of *this* intoxicant?

Such a supposition is the more unreasonable as beer is more expensive to the public-house customer than spirits.

But somebody may say: Well, let us leave the question of the influence of the economic conditions open and look upon the matter from another point of view. It is not the Gothenburg system, but it is the moral and religious progress, the spread of education and cultivation among the masses by means of a reformed board-school

[1] 7 1/2 *öre* = 1 d. — [2] 1 *krona* = 100 öre = 1 s. 1 1/2 d.

system and especially the temperance movement that are to be considered as causes of the diminution in the consumption of spirits.

And again I point at the increasing drunkenness. Or, perhaps are these causes less effective in counteracting an immoderate consumption of beer? But if we have no reason to believe this, how is the enormous increase of drunkenness to be accounted for, and why are the victims of the *beer* shops so numerous?

Now, I dare say, all thoughtful observers of real facts will agree with me that the *method* of conducting a liquor traffic has a very marked influence upon the consumption of liquors. And if this is admitted, I cannot find it but indisputable that *the method* of regulating the liquor traffic, *adopted by the Gothenburg Public-House Company* or the Gothenburg system, is capable of such influence, this method which has proved itself as a protection

against the evil influences of the individual greed of gain,

against the continued impoverishment of poor public-house visitors through drinking on credit or pawn-tickets,

against the public-house visits of young people and their enticement to drink,

against the neglecting of the sanitary interests of the public-house customers with regard to the premises and the food which is sold there,

against the transgressing of the restrictive regulations of the Law with regard to the hours of sale, the quantities allowed to be sold and the whole management of the business,

against a competition which lowers the prices,

against an unnecessarily great number of licenses being used, although granted,

against the withholding of any part of the sale from taxation and finally

against the rise of a mighty class of private publicans who, wherever they exist, are the greatest hindrance to the success of moral or religious movements.

* * *

Mr. Whyte lays much stress upon the fact that in England where there is no company system for the sale of spirits, the consumption of spirits and the number of convictions for drunkenness

are less than in Sweden where such a system has been brought into operation. I beg to say that this is no evidence either for nor against the system. In spite of all the restrictions, on account of which this system is able to exercise a regulating and moderating influence on the consumption of spirits, it is, however, beyond its power to have any regenerative effect upon the moral and religious life of the people. But from these sources do the living forces flow that sometimes bring a people in which an inveterate custom has begun to be an occasion of stumbling, to obey the command of the Master to »pluck it out and cast it from thee», even if it has reason to fear that this will result in the most radical changes in the social organism. If it really is so that the consumption of spirits and drunkenness are less prevailing in England than in Sweden, this obviously shows that the religious and moral powers have had a mightier influence on the English people than on the Swedish. But if nevertheless the system is adopted in England, I am sure that it will exercise the same influence of which it has been capable in our country.

As for Mr. Whyte's remark that the company system has proved more efficient in Norway than in Sweden, because the temperance reformers of Norway have had nothing to do with »a constructive policy», I beg to say that I am fully convinced that the cause of this fact is quite another. The reforms in the liquor legislation of Norway were brought about ten years earlier than in Sweden. The temperance reformers of our country have evidently had to cope with much greater difficulties than in Norway, especially with regard to the legislation which in our country was in the hands of four Estates while in Norway there was only one Chamber, very soon influenced by the popular opinion, which at this time was so characterized not only by a regenerated political interest which reacted against the deadening influence of the liquor consumption, but also by the religious revival, which some time before had thrilled the Norwegian nation, by nature so seriously disposed. *One* reason given by Mr. Whyte in explanation of this same fact is, that there is food supplied to the customers of the drink shops in Gothenburg, but in Bergen they can only get spirits there. He supposes that a shorter time is spent in the Bergen public-houses than in those of Gothenburg. Before my attention was called to the duties

of the community towards the drunkard, I was of the same opinion and I have nothing to add to what I have written above on this subject. But I hardly believe that the greater temperance in Bergen than in Gothenburg is to be credited to this fact. Mr. Whyte has found another reason in the different use of the license fees and the profits of the companies. I long believed that there was such a difference between the two countries, and there is a difference between their laws in this respect. But in his speech at the Alcohol Congress in Christiania in 1890 Mr. *Berner*, the wellknown Norwegian temperance advocate, has stated that this difference is merely formal and that practically the liquor revenues are distributed and used in about the same way. Hence this reason is not plausible. But it is quite right to suppose that, if there is more temperance in one country than in another or in one town than in another where the general conditions are about the same, there must be differences of a *deeper* nature than those which can be traced in some outward arrangement.

* * *

I am sure that Mr. Whyte has been led to the conclusion of the whole matter to which he has arrived by the anticipations with which he has gone to work. He has not found what he expected to find. Hence he rejects the system. He says: »The facts which I have submitted prove that those experiments made by philanthropists and municipal authorities in Gothenburg and in Bergen have utterly failed to show that they can successfully support the enormous responsibility of carrying on the traffic in strong drink without inflicting upon the community, on behalf of which they act, evils so patent and of such magnitude as to constitute a reproach on the legislature that suffers them to exist.»

The earnest temperance advocate has with these words said about same as was uttered some years ago by the foremost man among the spirit distillers of this country. His judgment seemed to be as seriously meant as that of Mr. Whyte, and when his appeals to the people were scattered all over the country, the temperance people first of all listened to his words. But in the decisive battle, where were they? Did they then join in the war cry: »Down

with the companies!» which some time before had been so imposing?

No, they had resumed their old parol, more natural to them, viz.: »Away with the spirits!» It had been made plain to them that, as long as spirits were allowed to be manufactured and sold, it was better to have them sold under such control as is exercised by the companies than by private publicans without any such control.

And this is the reason why the legislature suffers the companies to exist. Their work is not looked upon as a temperance work, the failures of which require the interference of the legislature for the abolition of the system. What is demanded by the legislature is only the strictest observation of the rules, fixed for the sale of spirits, knowing that inasmuch as these have a restrictive, prohibitive or generally moral purpose the interests of the community will be looked after in a better and safer way by the companies than by private publicans.

Like many other temperance reformers, Mr. Whyte is not content with this. His demands are greater than that. He wants the system to do miracles; for it certainly would be a miracle if *a method of regulating the sale of spirits* could cause such effects as would *satisfy* a temperance reformer. I for my part cannot understand how it would be possible to devise a plan for the sale of liquors which would have such wonderful effects that the injurious effects both on the community and on individuals which up to this time have always and everywhere been caused by the consumption of intoxicating drinks would at once be prevented.

I need not point out the impossibility of this. These evil effects cannot be prevented by any licensing system in the world, they will not disappear before the consumption of spirits has disappeared by means of a gradual suppression of the appetite therefor. But this reform will never be brought about by such systems or any outward ordinances. It is brought about only by moral and religious influences. But when, on this way, we have reached so far that the majorities of the nations will know »the things which belong unto peace», then the licensing systems may be succeeded by the probibition systems.

But till then we must take care not to reject any help which from a noble motive is offered to us by our allies in the struggle

against this great evil. Neglecting the use of a less effective remedy cannot be excused by a declaration that we are not content unless the most effective one is offered. If our fathers had acted on tbis principle, if the policy of these modern temperance reformers who try to depreciate the value of every reform which bas not prohibition for its aim, had been followed by them — where would *we* have been? If any lesson is to he taken from the bistory of the liquor legislation of Sweden, it is: that the object in view is more easily attained if it is perseveringly approached step by step, tban by standing still, in vain efforts to bring about reforms which may he highly desirable but are impracticable, even if this stand-point has heen chosen on tbe top of some Nebo of enthusiasm, from wbich, at least in clear weather, the Promised Land of one's wishes appears by glimpses. When a shipwreck has taken place and tbe foamy waves swarm with shipwrecked wbo in every moment are in peril of sinking, tbe life-boat crews will certainly not blame the men who from a float — very defective perbaps — do tbeir best to take part in the attempts to save as many lives as possible, even if those wbo have been hauled up on the float are even tbere exposed to tbe surges. And less than ever are they to he blamed, if a great number of the sinking men cannot he reached by the boats and no ship is in sight, not even in the distant far. In the moment when the venerable ark of tbe prohibition system has reached our coast and has heen received with applause by a people, ripe for the adoption of the same, tbe Gotbenburg system and all otber apparatuses for belping those who are struggling in the liquor waves may be condemned and rejected. But till then it has an object to fulfil. And if the principles of tbe system are loyally and conscientiously kept in view, I believe that those to whom the realization of tbese principles has heen confided need not feel too much cast down by the hard and merciless condemnations, not seldom pronounced on tbem by radicals among the temperance reformers. These radicals, like all other extremists, have a rather strong colouring of theory. Practical measures witb a view to bind, at least to a certain extent, the hands of King Alcohol, instead of aiming blows at his well protected throat, seem to tbem repulsive and rejectable. But inasmucb as it has not yet been clearly pointed out by experience which method is the more efficient, I believe that both these methods are

to be used. Even the most high-flowing temperance workers must not seldom, with a painful feeling of their own incapacity, admit that the outcome of their work is rather insignificant. Hence they ought not to feel any indignation or wonder, if some other means of defence, than those offered by them, are considered necessary for the protection of the community. And even if, with a sense of their own undoubted rigtheousness, they thank God for the higber understanding that has prevented them from taking any part in the efforts of the Gotbenburg System to reform the business wbicb is carried on by the publicans of our times — I am rather uncertain whether they rather than these others answer the claims of the highest love of the brethren.

Stockholm, November, 1893.

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